12/30/87 A3100-2

December 15, 1987, Volume 191, Number 12

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JOURNAL
OF THE AMERICAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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Vol 191 December 15, 1987 No. 12
JAVMA 191(12) 1525-1652 (1987)
ISSN 0003-1488

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SUBSCRIPTIONS: For one year: members $25; others $50 in the United States and possessions; $65 in foreign countries. Single copies: $4.00 in the United States and possessions; $5.00 in foreign countries.

Published semimonthly at 930 N Meacham Rd, Schaumburg, IL 60196, by the American Veterinary Medical Association. Second class postage paid at Schaumburg, Ill, and at additional mailing offices. Contents copyright 1987 by the AVMA.

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to JAVMA, 930 N Meacham Rd, Schaumburg, IL 60196.

BPA

Employment of 1987 male and female graduates of US veterinary medical colleges

On the basis of the 1987 AVMA survey of 1,288 graduates of US veterinary medical colleges, it was estimated that 80% of the graduates accepted positions as private practice employees at a mean annual salary of $22,152.[1] This report describes in detail the employment choices of 1987 male and female veterinary medical college graduates.

Type of employment

Of the 1,288 graduates responding to the 1987 AVMA survey, 46% were women and 54% were men. Table 1 shows the proportion of graduates receiving offers of employment upon graduation. Excluding graduates entering advance study programs (graduate degrees, internships, or residencies), only 81% of the women received one or more offers of employment, compared with 90% of the men. These percentages are higher than reported for 1986 graduates, which is most likely attributable to the fact that the 1987 survey was conducted approximately one month later in the spring than in 1986.[2]

Regarding graduates who had accepted employment (65%), 93% of the women and 99% of the men would work full-time, whereas 7% of the women and 1% of the men would work part-time. Of the 32 graduates indicating part-time employment, 25 (78%) were women, and 7 (22%) were men.

The distribution of female and male graduates was determined according to type of full-time employment (Table 2). Approximately 79% of female and male graduates accepting full-time employment took positions as employees in private practice. About 14% of the women, compared with 12% of the men, began advanced study programs.

*Table 1—Employment offers: Male and female, 1987**

	Male (n = 608)	Female (n = 519)	Total (n = 1,127)
Received 1 or more offers	90%	81%	86%
Received no offers	10%	19%	14%

*Excludes graduates entering advanced study programs.

Starting salaries

Graduates were asked to report their starting salary (on an annual basis) for full-time employment. Table 3 shows that the mean female graduate's starting salary as a private practice employee was $22,019, about $240 or 1% less than the mean male

Table 2—Full-time employment: Males and females, 1987

	Male (n = 436)	Female (n = 335)
Large animal exclusive (%)	2.0	1.5
Large animal predominant (%)	14.7	2.4
Mixed animal (%)	15.9	10.1
Small animal predominant (%)	12.1	11.3
Small animal exclusive (%)	30.4	52.2
Equine predominant (%)	4.6	1.8
University (research, teaching) (%)	1.2	1.2
Federal government (%)	0.6	—
Military service (%)	1.8	0.9
State/local government (%)	—	0.3
Industry/commercial business (%)	0.2	0.3
Advanced study (%)	11.9	14.3
Self-employed (%)	4.0	3.0
Other employment (%)	0.4	0.6

Table 3—Starting salary by type of practice: Males and females, 1987

	Male	Female
Large animal exclusive	$25,140 (10)	$19,600 (4)
Large animal predominant	$22,281 (73)	$19,757 (7)
Mixed animal	$21,133 (78)	$20,937 (32)
Small animal predominant	$21,957 (56)	$21,135 (37)
Small animal exclusive	$22,732 (146)	$22,649 (168)
Equine predominant	$22,434 (23)	$19,883 (6)
All practice types	$22,255 (386)	$22,019 (254)

Figures in parentheses = No. of graduates reporting full-time employment and starting salary.

Prepared by J. Karl Wise, PhD, Wisemark Associates, PO Box 681189, Schaumburg, IL 60168-1189.

Table 4—Fringe benefits of full-time employed graduates: Male and female, 1987

	Male (n = 496)	Female (n = 335)	Total (n = 831)
Life insurance (%)	25	21	23
Medical/hospital plan (%)	61	58	60
Dental plan (%)	11	10	11
Pension plan (%)	12	6	10
Profit sharing plan (%)	13	11	12
Disability insurance (%)	29	24	27
Liability insurance (%)	53	49	51
Association dues (%)	43	39	41
Continuing education (%)	62	59	61
Annual vacation leave (%)	75	75	75
Sick leave (%)	41	39	40
Housing/apartment (%)	5	5	5

graduate's starting salary as a private practice employee. In mixed animal and in small animal exclusive practices, women and men had nearly identical mean salaries. In other types of private practice, however, men would earn higher salaries on average, by amounts ranging from about $820 in small animal predominant to more than $5,000 in large animal exclusive practice. The survey did not secure information on each graduate's responsibilities or hours worked in the new job, thus, it is not possible to draw conclusions from these survey data about reasons associated with varying salary levels between male and female graduates.

Fringe benefits

All graduates were asked to indicate which of 12 fringe benefits would be provided by their new employer. Table 4 shows the percentage of male and female graduates who accepted full-time employment receiving each of the fringe benefits. The percentages of men and women receiving fringe benefits were similar. Approximately 58% of the women and 61% of the men would be covered by a medical/hospital plan, 75% of women and men would receive annual vacation leave, and 59% of women and 62% of men would have employer-paid continuing education expenses.

Graduate characteristics

Responding graduates provided information on personal characteristics such as age, marital status, and number of children (Table 5). The mean age of females and males was 27 years. Regarding marital status, 64% of female graduates were single, 31% were married, and 4% were divorced. Of the male graduates, 47% were single, 51% were married, and 2% were divorced. About 6% of the women and 20% of the men had one or more children.

Table 5—Personal characteristics: Male and female, 1987

	Male	Female	Total
Mean age (yr)	27	27	27
Marital status			
Single (%)	47	64	55
Married (%)	51	31	42
Divorced (%)	2	4	3
Graduates with children (%)	20	6	13

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2. Wise JK. Employment of 1986 male and female graduates of US veterinary medical colleges. *J Am Vet Med Assoc* 1987;190:449–450.